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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FEDERAL EXTENSION SERVICE  
Washington 25, D. C.

SUMMARY OF FEDERAL EXTENSION SERVICE TASK FORCE COMMITTEE

REPORT ON MARKETING

Trends

During the past few years changes in the market organization and structure have taken place at a rapid rate. Corporate chains have integrated the functions of centralized and specialized buying, transporting, storing, and distributing to retail units with resulting efficiencies and lowering of costs, resulting in increased volume movement and lower margins. In the past few years independent business operators in the wholesale and retail food fields have incorporated similar management methods and handling efficiencies that have maintained a competitive balance in the food distribution field. The net result of these changes has been a dispersion of wholesale market facilities on a trade area pattern, a reduction in the number of retail stores, and a smaller number of buyers for agricultural products. Specialization in production has served to further isolate individual farmers from the market place, yet the chain of distribution is constantly shortening through business integration and technical developments. In many areas, however, the farm marketing practices and methods have not kept pace with the adjustments occurring in the market place.

Importance of the Marketing Job

At the present time about 1 million firms employing roughly 10 million workers are engaged in marketing products of farm origin. Many of the 5 million farmers in the United States also perform some functions and services classified as marketing. Also involved, of course, are 160 million consumers. Costs involved in processing, storage, transportation, wholesaling, retailing, and other marketing services now amount to more than half of the consumer's total food bill.

How and Where Should Educational Work in Marketing be Conducted

Marketing and production are in many respects closely related, yet they are two separate functions. While educational work in marketing with farmers should be continued, and expanded in many areas, it must be recognized that the greatest opportunities for achieving significant marketing changes can be realized in working with handlers, processors, and consumers. Extension must approach marketing education from the standpoint of marketing problems as such, rather than from the organization of subject matter departments in the colleges. The technological aspects of marketing problems should receive attention as well as the economics of marketing problems.



### Position of Extension to do Educational Work in Marketing

Extension currently has a core of well-trained and experienced specialists who can give guidance to an enlarged marketing program. In new areas where little formal training is available, the trade is demonstrating its ability and desire to help Extension develop training programs for the new personnel.

Many county extension agents have had some experience in doing educational work with handlers and consumers. With additional personnel available for them and sufficient administrative support, one may reasonably expect expanded marketing programs at the county level.

### Organizing and Administering Marketing Programs

In developing or reorganizing the work, recognition should be given to the fact that educational work in marketing encompasses several subject-matter fields, and that responsibility for development of extension marketing programs rests with the State Extension Director. In order to obtain coordination in many States it may be necessary to assign responsibility for the development of programs and their operation to one person responsible to the director.

### Measurement of Results

Some systematic means of measuring accomplishments should be included as an integral part of all marketing programs. Objective measurements can be made in terms of specific objectives such as changes in attitudes, improved methods and practices adopted or reduced costs.

### Some Types of Extension Marketing Work in the Counties or Areas

1. Consumer Marketing Information.
2. Demonstrations of marketing practices with shippers, processors, and others.
3. Analyzing community position with regard to location of new firms.
4. Educational work in public affairs pertaining to marketing.
5. Providing information on supplies to buyers in other areas.
6. Providing information on market demands and consumer preferences.
7. Analyzing and interpreting crop reports in terms of the local situation.

### Areas or Types of Marketing Work of State Specialists

1. Provide technical assistance in program leadership to county personnel.
2. Work with State, area organization, and other groups on development of practical programs.
3. Conduct meetings and training sessions with county personnel and other agencies.
4. Conduct demonstrations on the use of new or improved technology.
5. Provide consultant service to county committees and marketing firms.
6. Cooperate with other State and Federal agencies dealing with the solution of national and regional problems.
7. Cooperate with other State extension workers in encouraging attention to marketing problems on the part of various Extension groups.
8. State specialists may serve in a liaison capacity with industry to bring back problems needing attention by research workers.

Types of Work of Federal Office Personnel

1. Work with State administrators and specialists in the development of programs aimed at solving local, regional, or national problems.
2. Provides leadership in the development of work in new areas or fields.
3. Develops and maintains liaison between State Extension Services and national marketing firms and governmental organizations.
4. Provides program leadership to State personnel.
5. Develops methods for applying subject matter materials to educational programs and supplies sources of information to enable State specialists to keep abreast of the current situation and utilize their time most efficiently.
6. Conducts demonstrations of new techniques, methods, and materials being utilized by other specialists or marketing organizations that have proven to be practical.
7. Reports on accomplishments of extension marketing programs.

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